

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An edible composition comprising an amount of a soluble mineral component, wherein the soluble mineral component comprises two or more minerals selected from the group consisting of zinc, manganese, tin, copper, and mixtures thereof,
wherein the amount is an effective amount for use as an oral medicament, a source of protein, and a further amount of a phosphate component,
wherein the further amount is an effective amount for use as an oral medicament;
wherein at least a portion of both the soluble mineral component and the phosphate component are coated on the surface of the composition such that at least part of the mineral component is dissolved in saliva of a dog or cat during mastication; and
wherein the edible composition comprises a nutritionally balanced dog food or cat food composition-is adapted for use by a companion animal.
2. (Currently Amended) The edible composition according to Claim 1 wherein:
 - a. when the composition comprises zinc, the composition comprises at least ~~about~~ 0.001% zinc ion, by weight of the composition;
 - b. when the composition comprises tin, the composition comprises at least ~~about~~ 0.0001% tin ion, by weight of the composition;
 - c. when the composition comprises copper, the composition comprises at least ~~about~~ 0.0005% copper ion, by weight of the composition; and
 - d. when the composition comprises manganese, the composition comprises at least ~~about~~ 0.0001% manganese ion, by weight of the composition.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Currently Amended) The edible composition according to Claim 3 wherein at least ~~about~~ 50% of the mineral component, by weight of the mineral component, is coated on the surface of the composition.

5. (Currently Amended) The edible composition according to Claim 2 comprising at least ~~about~~ 0.02% of the mineral component, by weight of the composition.
6. (Original) The edible composition according to Claim 5 wherein:
 - a. when the mineral component comprises zinc, the mineral component comprises a salt selected from the group consisting of zinc sulfate, zinc gluconate, zinc chloride, zinc citrate, zinc lactate, zinc malate, and mixtures thereof;
 - b. when the mineral component comprises tin, the mineral component comprises a salt selected from the group consisting of tin lactate, tin gluconate, tin acetate, tin sulfate, tin malate, and mixtures thereof;
 - c. when the mineral component comprises copper, the mineral component comprises a salt selected from the group consisting of copper chloride, copper gluconate, copper sulfate, copper bisglycinate, copper lactate, copper malate, copper acetate, and mixtures thereof; and
 - d. when the mineral component comprises manganese, the mineral component comprises a salt selected from the group consisting of manganese chloride, manganese sulfate, manganese gluconate, manganese acetate, and mixtures thereof.
7. (Original) The edible composition according to Claim 6 wherein:
 - a. when the composition comprises zinc, the composition comprises from about 0.001% to about 1% zinc ion, by weight of the composition;
 - b. when the composition comprises tin, the composition comprises from about 0.0005% to about 0.1% tin ion, by weight of the composition;
 - c. when the composition comprises copper, the composition comprises from about 0.0005% to about 0.1% copper ion, by weight of the composition; and
 - d. when the composition comprises manganese, the composition comprises from about 0.001% to about 0.5% manganese ion, by weight of the composition.
8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) The edible composition according to Claim 1 wherein at least a portion of the phosphate component is a pyrophosphate.
10. (Previously Presented) The edible composition according to Claim 1 wherein at least a portion of the phosphate is a polyphosphate.
11. (Previously Presented) The edible composition according to Claim 1 comprising three or more minerals selected from the group consisting of zinc, manganese, tin, copper, and mixtures thereof.
- 12-54. (Canceled)
55. (Withdrawn) A method selected from the group consisting of treating oral cavity tarter, oral cavity plaque, oral cavity bacterial growth, periodontal disease, gingivitis, breath odor, and combinations thereof in a companion animal comprising orally administering to the companion animal the edible composition according to Claim 1.
56. (Withdrawn) A method selected from the group consisting of treating oral cavity tarter, oral cavity plaque, oral cavity bacterial growth, periodontal disease, gingivitis, breath odor, and combinations thereof in a companion animal comprising orally administering to the companion animal the edible composition according to Claim 16.
57. (Withdrawn) A method selected from the group consisting of treating oral cavity tarter, oral cavity plaque, oral cavity bacterial growth, periodontal disease, gingivitis, breath odor, and combinations thereof in a companion animal comprising orally administering to the companion animal the edible composition according to Claim 26.
58. (Withdrawn) A method selected from the group consisting of treating oral cavity tarter, oral cavity plaque, oral cavity bacterial growth, periodontal disease, gingivitis, breath odor, and combinations thereof in a companion animal comprising orally administering to the companion animal the edible composition according to Claim 37.

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59. (Withdrawn) A method selected from the group consisting of treating oral cavity tarter, oral cavity plaque, oral cavity bacterial growth, periodontal disease, gingivitis, breath odor, and combinations thereof in a companion animal comprising orally administering to the companion animal the edible composition according to Claim 48.